



Even though the Elise S has a relatively unsophisticated cabin, it does have supportive, sculpted sports seats and functional, easy to operate, controls. The highlights are a standard lightweight aluminium passenger footrest, a black leather gear lever gaiter, a polished aluminium gear knob and handbrake sleeve, and an engine start push button. The shirt-button sized, leather-clad steering wheel is a delight to grasp – and it instils confidence with razor-sharp, direction-finding, precision. In fact, if you think your car steers well, you need to try an Elise, because the level of feel, accuracy and weighting is matchless.

The Lotus hangs on to the bends effortlessly and not many cars can supply the out of the ordinary balance that Lotus weaves into the Elise's DNA. The S's engine is the perfect accomplice to that inborn stability – and the brakes erase momentum as quickly as speed is achieved in the first place. Only the slightly stubborn, stiff, gear shift action disappoints.

Very few cars in this sector will match the thrill you get from driving – or even being a passenger in the new Elise S. An obvious competitor – the Japanese made Mazda MX-5 is miles cheaper and more refined, but it has nothing on the performance and image of the Lotus.



PROS 'N' CONS

- Fast ✓
- Sexy ✓
- Road-holding ✓
- Steering precision ✓
- Gear shift action X

FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 145 mph
- 0-62 mph: 4.6 secs
- Combined mpg: 37.5
- Engine: 1798 cc 4 cylinder 16 valve supercharged petrol
- Max. power (bhp): 217 at 6800 rpm
- Max. torque (lb/ft): 184 at 4600 rpm
- CO2: 175 g/km
- Price: £37,150 on the road

